



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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news digest

93029D

Mission consultation offers outsider's view of Episcopal Church

Twenty partners from 13 churches spent two weeks visiting 19 dioceses of the Episcopal Church taking the pulse of ministry at the local level. Then they gathered at a retreat center in suburban Chicago to offer their observations on the most pressing issues facing the church and make a few suggestions about how to respond. When they gathered February 4 for the second Partners in Mission Consultation, they identified six key issues:

- relationships with ecumenical and interfaith communities
- lay ministry, clericalism and youth/education ministries
- social action, prophetic mission and pastoral care
- examination of the structures of the church at all levels
- exploration of our identity as Episcopalians and Anglicans
- cultural diversity and inclusivity

At the closing Eucharist, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said that the partners had "affirmed us in a magnificent way--but also challenged us to change in the ways we relate to one another and our structures." Browning said that one of the strongest messages from the consultation was the need "to change or die." He quoted Winston Churchill who once said that one must "take change by the hand before it takes you by the throat." Echoing concerns of the participants, Browning emphasized how important it is to share "this life-giving experience" with the rest of the church.

While worrying about how to integrate the observations of the partners into the planning process, Executive Council members expressed deep gratitude for participation and were convinced it would have a lasting effect on the Episcopal Church. "This consultation affirms the direction we are going, reminding us that we still have a long way to go--but it is a long time since we left the station," Bishop Charles McNutt said in the closing session. (Page 7)

93030D

Executive Council inaugurates listening process to discern national mission strategy

As if they were members of a national vestry for the church, Executive Council members at the February 10-12 meeting in Mundelein, Illinois, greeted statistics showing a growth in membership for the denomination, reviewed generally favorable budget forecasts for the new year, and sought to galvanize increased participation by Episcopalians in the life of the church.

The council met on the heels of a Partners in Mission Consultation (PIM), a meeting that sought reflection and advice on mission and ministry from representatives from other Anglican provinces and ecumenical partners (See separate story). By the end of the council meeting, members were gearing up for a bold new initiative that will involve Episcopalians in every diocese in the planning of the mission strategy of the church.

The PIM consultation served as a prelude to a similar listening process within the church established at last fall's Executive Council meeting. Like an "every-member-canvass" campaign of all the church's dioceses, members of the Executive Council and a member of the national church's staff will spread out through the entire church to set up "listening posts" to help in long-range strategic planning for the church's mission. (Page 10)

93031D

Bishop of Montana takes leave of absence to heal conflicts in diocese

Bishop C.I. Jones of the Diocese of Montana announced in a February 19 letter to the diocese that he was "undertaking a 30-day medical leave to undergo an evaluation process at the Menninger Clinic" and would then seek a sabbatical leave before determining whether or not to continue as bishop.

The bishop had encountered criticism in recent years over "a history of awkward and confrontative relationships with leaders in the diocese" that had not been resolved, according to Speed Leas, a consultant from the Alban Institute in Washington, D.C. Tensions between the bishop and the diocese were complicated even further following a February 10 complaint sent to Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning about a "sexual relationship with an adult female parishioner" prior to his election as bishop. Although Jones admitted his involvement in the relationship in his letter to the diocese, no

legal charges have been filed against him at this point.

Following a sabbatical, "the bishop, the standing committee, and the presiding bishop will then review the appropriateness of the bishop and the diocese continuing in mission together," the consultant advised. (Page 14)

93032D

Urban Caucus participants envision society and church without racism

Bishop Barbara Harris told participants at the recent 14th annual meeting of the Episcopal Urban Caucus (EUC) that mainline Christian churches--and the Episcopal Church especially--face a grim future because "they have been more concerned about survival than about justice." Harris's contention at the EUC meeting capped two days of lectures and workshops on the issues of racism in the church and society.

EUC participants agreed on a strategy with a three-fold mission: to focus on racism for the next nine years, to develop publications and materials for the church, and to affirm urban mission strategies.

"If we focus on racism we need to keep clarity about our primary goals," said the Rev. Emmett Jarrett of Washington, D.C., president of the EUC. "This is not a black-white issue only. And we need to be careful not to squabble with others about whose pain is greater," he added, referring to issues such as sexuality where emotions run strong. "We are at the point of a paradigm shift in society, the giving up of white power." (Page 15)

93033D

Archbishop George Browne of Liberia, 'peacemaker and visionary,' dead at 59

The Most Rev. George Browne, 59, archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa and bishop of Liberia, died February 15 in Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital in Milwaukee after an extended illness. Browne was internationally renowned for his defiant leadership throughout the civil warfare in Liberia, where he was one of only two church leaders to stay in the capital of Monrovia during the height of the conflict in the summer of 1990.

"It says a great deal about Archbishop Browne and his understanding of Christian ministry that he deliberately chose to stay in Liberia with his people," said Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning. "I

know there are times when there are very good reasons to leave in similar situations, however George chose to stay. The conditions he lived under those difficult days I feel sure brought on the illness that caused his untimely death."

"He was respected by the different political factions as a man of the highest integrity and truth...and for his vision of Liberia as a peaceful and functioning country," said the Rev. Nathaniel Porter, the Episcopal Church's partnership officer for Africa. Porter said that Browne leaves the legacy of "a peacemaker and visionary for his people and his church." (Page 19)

93034D

Bishop Furman Stough returns to Alabama to begin 'new ministry'

Bishop Robert Miller of Alabama has announced that his predecessor, Bishop Furman Stough, will return to the Diocese of Alabama as assistant bishop beginning July 1.

Stough served as bishop of Alabama from 1971 until 1988, when he received an appointment at Episcopal Church's national headquarters in New York City. For five years, Stough was senior executive for planning and deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief.

Stough said that he will continue his work for the national church on a part-time basis as a special advisor to Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, and that he will work to strengthen the Episcopal Legacy Fund, the church's national effort to provide scholarships to ethnic minority college students. He will also continue his development efforts with major donors for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. (Page 21)

93035D

National student gathering becomes forum for faith and diversity

More than 200 participants at the recent fifth annual gathering of Episcopal college students, chaplains and faculty discovered that the Episcopal Church is big enough to include persons who do not always agree about important issues.

Participants in the gathering at Epworth Center on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, soon discovered that affirming diversity is not always easy or comfortable. Sharp disagreements among students on how the faith should

meet contemporary challenges reflected debates in the wider church.

"The conference revealed the differences in the Episcopal Church, and invited students to explore their feelings about that," said the Rev. Jep Streit, Episcopal chaplain at Boston University and chair of the planning committee for the meeting. "I think many of the students will return to their campuses with a clearer understanding of differences among Episcopalians and how we live together and keep talking in spite of those differences," Streit said.
(Page 22)

93036D

Team of Irish peacemakers plead for economic help during U.S. visit

The four top religious leaders from Ireland used an eight-day U.S. visit to preach reconciliation and tolerance as the path to "peace, prosperity and political progress." During a February tour of Washington, Philadelphia, New York and Boston, the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican church leaders urged American support for their efforts and pleaded for economic investment in Northern Ireland. "We have come to confront the lie that what is happening in Northern Ireland is some sort of religious war between Roman Catholics and Protestants," said Anglican Archbishop Robert Eames of Armagh.

In conversations with leaders in the political, business, religious and academic communities, the church leaders preached a message of hope for a future that lies not in violence but in economic development, political negotiation for sharing of power and building trust through cooperative programs. (Page 24)

93037D

Changes in England's religious life provoke new debate on establishment

Recent turmoil in Britain's royal family has provoked new debate on the relationship between the state and the Church of England. Archbishop of York John Habgood set off the debate when he was asked during an interview if the sovereign should continue to be supreme governor of an established church. "If the church is to relate to the nation as a whole, the relationship with the sovereign is necessary," Habgood said on a BBC television program.

The former archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Robert Runcie, said the advantages of establishment outweigh the disadvantages because it gives the church "the opportunity of keeping faith alive in a secular age." He said the debate should not be embroiled in current controversies about the royal family.

Yet Runcie said disestablishment was inevitable, adding that he once thought it "was quite likely to happen before the end of the century." The arguments against establishment are quite strong, according to Runcie, in light of the increasing pluralism of British society. (Page 25)

93029

Mission consultation offers outsider's view of Episcopal Church

by James Solheim

They came from churches around the world--some members of the Anglican family but others representing ecumenical partners--to share their observations of the most pressing issues facing the Episcopal Church and offer suggestions on how to respond.

When they gathered February 4 for the second Partners in Mission Consultation (PIM) at a retreat center in suburban Chicago, 20 participants from 13 churches had visited 19 dioceses of the Episcopal Church during the previous week and listened to the heartbeat of the church's mission on the local level. They had been invited to help the church at a "crucial point as we move deeper into our planning for the future," according to Barry Menezes, senior executive for planning.

Their report to the church's Executive Council was often humorous, always respectful and loving, and occasionally barbed with critical insights. During their diocesan visits they quickly discovered, for example, the ambivalent attitudes towards the national church structures, "ranging from indifference to hostility." They heard some confusion on issues of Episcopal and Anglican identity and how much influence a small church could have on its society.

They noticed that, 15 years after approving the ordination of women to the priesthood, women still were still fighting for a leadership role in many dioceses. And that lay people, especially youth, were seldom used effectively for the church's ministry in the world. They also detected a deep hunger for spiritual nourishment.

During an open discussion of strengths and weaknesses, the "external" partners from other churches expressed admiration for the Episcopal Church's openness to criticism, for its energy, its creativity, its willingness to take risks, its spirituality and its courageous concern for others.

Yet they deplored the parochialism which encourages strong local parishes to think that they are the whole church, and they were disturbed by continuing evidence of clericalism, racism and sexism despite the best efforts to be an inclusive church. "There are still outcasts in your church, people who do not feel they belong," one partner observed.

"Part of our perception is that you are an issue-driven church," said

Philip Mawer, secretary general of the General Synod of the Church of England. He and others expressed a fear that, in an effort to address a staggering array of issues, the Episcopal Church would lose sight of its holistic vision. "The focus of the Christian life is not issues but the Spirit that helps us see our total mission," added another participant.

God dozed off

At one point the partners were filling newsprint pages with areas where the church must seek transformation--and God dozed off. In this case God was played by Dr. Charles Spivey, Jr., of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

At several points during the presentation God brought the conversation to a halt and expressed his impatience. "After 2000 years what do you mean you still don't understand what I want you to do?" he bellowed. "Get out of your churches and its shelter if you want to find the Holy Spirit," he chided. "You are too self-serving, you just want to feel good. What about my broken, bleeding world?"

While expressing hesitancy to provide answers, in its final report to the Executive Council the consultation expressed surprising agreement on a list of six key issue areas:

- relationships with ecumenical and interfaith communities
- lay ministry, clericalism and youth/education ministries
- social action, prophetic mission and pastoral care
- examination of the structures of the church at all levels
- exploration of our identity as Episcopalians and Anglicans
- cultural diversity and inclusivity

At the closing banquet, the Rev. Abigail Hamilton, a council member from the Diocese of Newark, read an impressionistic report from the drafting committee, offering a "new image--one that describes the church we have experienced together. It is an image that is honest, sturdy, useful and beautiful: our mother's braided rug."

Suggesting that the strands of the rug come in all colors and textures, and represent "the lives and experiences of all of us," Hamilton said that "some are strong and durable" while others are "flexible and elastic." Yet they are woven by God into a "thing of beauty whose design is its identity, whose beauty is unique. The strands may not always see their parts, or even the whole, but each can rejoice in being born again into new life."

As a thing of beauty and purpose, "it covers a multitude of sins with creative grace in action....And sometimes it is there simply to be rolled up so that we can dance."

At the closing Eucharist, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said that the partners had "affirmed us in a magnificent way--but also challenged us to change in the ways we relate to one another and our structures."

The presiding bishop said one of the strongest messages from the consultation was the need "to change or die." He quoted Winston Churchill who once said that one must "take change by the hand before it takes you by the throat." Echoing concerns of the participants, Browning emphasized how important it is to share "this life-giving experience" with the rest of the church.

Council forms action committee

Members of Executive Council who participated in the PIM Consultation brought to the full meeting a pronounced enthusiasm tinged with a fear that the message would be lost. "If we aren't serious, this could be smothered to death," said George Lockwood, council member from Hawaii, emphasizing the potential of the consultation findings for future planning in the church. "We are committed to be open for transformation," he said, expressing gratefulness to the partners and the "freshness that only outsiders can bring."

The council established an action committee of up to a dozen members "to facilitate and monitor the implementation of PIM II recommendations, addressing their implications for all levels and areas of our church's life." The committee will report to future meetings of the Executive Council and to the external partners. As a first step, a group of youth and young adults will be invited to the June meeting of the council to share their reactions to the documents from the PIM Consultation.

PIM is expression of international links

Following a 1963 Anglican Congress in Toronto, the Anglican Communion endorsed a program calling on every church to embrace a renewal based on the three central truths at the heart of the Christian faith--mission, unity and interdependence. The Episcopal Church General Convention in 1964 formed a Mutual Responsibility Commission to shape its response.

A major response was the first Partners in Mission Consultation in 1977 which "helped the American church come of age" by adopting a commitment to autonomy for overseas dependent partners and "forge a better process and policy" in developing covenant agreements, according to Barry Menuetz, senior executive for planning and development.

Bishop Rustin Kimsey of Eastern Oregon, who chaired the planning committee for the 1977 PIM and now chairs the council's long-range planning

committee, reflected on both meetings. He found the "affirmation of our vitality" very helpful because "it is not always easy to stop and celebrate our abundant grace."

When asked about tangible results, Kimsey said that the 1977 PIM gave a boost to multi-cultural ministries in Province 8, comprised mostly of the dioceses on the West Coast, and helped build some identity as Anglicans. He sees both PIM meetings as important "listening posts" to help the church evaluate where it is in understanding its mission. "This PIM is a very significant part of our whole discernment process as we move to the 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis," he said.

While worrying about how to integrate the observations of the partners into the planning process, Executive Council members expressed deep gratitude for their participation and were convinced it would have a lasting impact on the Episcopal Church. "This consultation affirms the direction we are going, reminding us that we still have a long way to go--but it is a long time since we left the station," Bishop Charles McNutt said in the closing session.

93030

Executive Council inaugurates listening process to discern national mission strategy

by Jeffrey Penn

As untold numbers of parish vestries across the country were engaged in annual planning retreats, the Episcopal Church's 38-member Executive Council withdrew for three days of prayer and planning to chart the future direction of the church's mission.

As if they were members of a national vestry for the church, Executive Council members at the February 10-12 meeting in Mundelein, Illinois, greeted statistics showing a growth in membership for the denomination, reviewed generally favorable budget forecasts for the new year and sought to galvanize increased participation by Episcopalians in the life of the church.

The council met on the heels of a Partners in Mission Consultation (PIM), a meeting that sought reflection and advice on mission and ministry

from representatives from other Anglican provinces and ecumenical partners (See separate story). By the end of the council meeting, members were gearing up for a bold new initiative that will involve Episcopalians in every diocese in the planning of the mission strategy of the church.

Time to act

An official visitor from the Anglican Church of Canada, Anne Davidson, noted that the council, like Jesus, had "taken time apart" for refreshment and reflection. Yet, Davidson said that "the time for talking is over. The time to act is now." She challenged council members to "return to the world to act on your decisions."

Davidson's challenge was a reflection of PIM participants on the mission of the Episcopal Church. Following whirlwind visits to 19 dioceses, the external partners applauded the Episcopal Church's openness to criticism, its energy, creativity, willingness to take risks, its spirituality and its courageous concern for others.

Yet the partners also criticized the church for continuing evidence of clericalism, racism and sexism despite the best efforts to be an inclusive church. "There are still outcasts in your church--people who do not feel they belong," one partner observed.

PIM participants urged the Executive Council to "practice what it preaches" in the baptismal covenant and to measure all its work against the vows of the covenant. The council appointed a nine-member PIM action committee to monitor the implementation of the PIM recommendations.

A listening post in every diocese

The PIM consultation served as a prelude to a similar listening process within the church established at last fall's Executive Council meeting. Like an "every-member-canvass" campaign of all the church's dioceses, members of the Executive Council and a member of the national church's staff will spread out through the entire church to set up "listening posts" to help in long-range strategic planning for the church's mission.

"These diocesan engagements will provide an opportunity for the visiting teams to learn how each diocese's vision for mission and ministry is being brought to life," said Vernon Hazlewood, the Episcopal Church's director of planning. "We will hear what the local priorities for ministry are, what supports those ministries and what are the needs for ministry development."

Hazlewood said that dioceses will be asked several questions to help guide the national church's planning strategy, including, "What do you see as the

major challenges and opportunities regarding mission and ministry facing you, your congregation and your diocese during the next 10 years and beyond?" and, "What do you see most essential for the ongoing structural and programmatic reform of the Episcopal Church at the national, provincial, diocesan and local levels?"

Already two diocesan visitations have been completed. Council members will now move into high gear in order to complete the rest of the 115 visitations by November.

Membership increases for second year

Church treasurer Ellen Cooke reported that 1991 parochial reports showed that the Episcopal Church registered an increase in membership for the second year in a row. New statistics show an increase of approximately 23,000 baptized members, from 2,448,772 in 1990, to 2,471,880 in 1991. In addition to the membership growth, parishes reported that more than 111,000 persons who are not currently registered as baptized members are "active" in the congregations.

The parochial reports showed that there were 663,071 pledging units in local stewardship programs who pledged over \$630 million in 1991, an average of \$20.96 per pledging unit per week.

For the first time in the parochial reports, congregations were asked to share information about their programs. A summary of the reports by participating parishes showed that approximately 160,000 people were served in soup kitchens supported by Episcopal Church parishes in 1991, and that 62,000 people were served through food pantries which were open 3.7 days per week in participating parishes.

In closing remarks to the council, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning greeted the news with a sense of optimism for the work ahead. "We have the possibility of turning this church in a new direction," he said. "I have a tremendous faith in this church of ours--in its beauty and strength and growing sense of mission."

Budget may follow thaw in national economy

Amid signs of a slowly improving national economy, there was some hope that the church might find relief from the severe financial crunch of recent years. Despite what she described as a "somewhat lackluster and flat economic climate" in 1992, Cooke seemed guardedly optimistic for 1993. She reported that 35 of the church's 117 dioceses have already sent pledges for their share of the 1993 budget.

According to Cooke, the 35 dioceses have pledged to contribute slightly

more than 96 percent of their request. She also noted that two dioceses will exceed their request--North Dakota by more than \$ 3,000, and Southern Ohio by more than \$35,000. Cooke also reported that the Diocese of Dallas, which withheld money from the national church in 1992, has pledged to pay 100 percent of its apportioned share in 1993.

Policy on sexual harassment and abuse adopted

After nearly a year of revisions, the council adopted a final version of a policy on sexual harassment and sexual abuse. "This is a significant piece of ongoing work," said Marci Walsh of South Carolina and chair of the council's program committee. The policy covers "participants in the activities under the auspices of the General Convention and Executive Council of the General Convention." Walsh pointed out the policy was "a first" and "a model" since the Episcopal Church was the first denomination to design a policy that covers "not only employees but also volunteers."

According to the policy, sexual harassment "includes any unwelcome sexual advance or conduct (written, spoken, or physical), any direct or indirect request for a sexual favor or suggestion that one might be granted and any tormenting behavior based on sex." Sexual abuse "includes any unwelcome physical or verbal sexual contact with another person in a context that would be regarded as unlawful or improper by local government authorities."

The council's policy establishes detailed procedures for filing complaints, proceeding with an investigation and sanctions against the perpetrators.

In other action, the council

- elected Barry Menuet, senior executive for planning and deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, as vice-president of the Executive Council;

- endorsed the North American Free Trade Agreement with support for strict environmental and fair wage standards for people of all countries affected;

- called for national legislation to fund expanded services for programs to alleviate childhood hunger and child abuse and to strengthen laws that provide child support and the nation's childhood immunization programs;

- supported an emergency grant of \$15,000 to the National Council of Churches' Urban Strategy Program, and pledged additional support if funds are available;

- declared the situation in Haiti a "special humanitarian concern," and called on the president of the United States to accelerate the procedure for

admitting Haitian refugees, urged the administration to use diplomatic and economic pressure to restore the democratically elected government of President Jean Bertrand Aristide and encouraged Episcopal Church dioceses to sponsor the resettlement of Haitian refugees through Episcopal Migration Ministries; and

■ affirmed two new jubilee centers--St. Paul's Jubilee Center in the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia and St. James' Academy, Lafayette Square, in the Diocese of Maryland, and reaffirmed the Ministry of Saints Martha and Mary Jubilee Center in the Diocese of Olympia.

93031

Bishop of Montana takes leave of absence to heal conflicts in diocese

by James Solheim

Bishop C.I. Jones of the Diocese of Montana announced in a February 19 letter to the diocese that he was "undertaking a 30-day medical leave to undergo an evaluation process at the Menninger Clinic" and would then seek a sabbatical leave before determining whether or not to continue as bishop.

Prior to the announcement, Jones and the diocese were involved in efforts to resolve conflicts between them and "provide growth and healing," said diocesan chancellor, Mark Cadwallader.

The bishop had encountered criticism in recent years over "a history of awkward and confrontative relationships with leaders in the diocese" that had not been resolved, according to Speed Lees, a consultant from the Alban Institute in Washington, D.C. As part of that process, the consultant had recommended that the bishop "separate himself from the diocese" by taking a leave of absence to "evaluate his leadership style (with professional assistance) and develop a plan for enhancing his leadership skill." The consultant also recommended that both the bishop and diocesan leadership work together to "identify the current patterns and behavior which inhibit healthy ways of dealing with difference and practice new ways of conflict management."

Tensions between the bishop and the diocese were complicated even further following a February 10 complaint sent to Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning about a "sexual relationship with an adult female parishioner" prior

to his election as bishop. Although Jones admitted his involvement in the relationship in his letter to the diocese, no legal charges have been filed against him at this point.

New ways of conflict management

Following a sabbatical, "the bishop, the standing committee, and the presiding bishop will then review the appropriateness of the bishop and the diocese continuing in mission together," the consultant advised.

"This process provides the necessary elements and safeguards to allow us to seek God's will in coming together in a renewed and healed relationship," Jones said in his letter. He asked for "forgiveness for the pain that I have caused in this diocese and elsewhere," and said he was praying that "my behavior and openness in this process exemplifies the willingness we must all exhibit to submit ourselves to healing."

In the bishop's absence, the diocesan standing committee will assume ecclesiastical responsibilities and make arrangements for episcopal functions.

93032

Urban Caucus participants envision society and church without racism

by Michael Barwell

Mainline Christian churches--and the Episcopal Church especially--face a grim future because "they have been more concerned about survival than about justice," Bishop Barbara Harris told 110 participants in the Episcopal Urban Caucus (EUC) meeting in Buffalo, February 18-20.

"Church officials would rather address death and sexual issues than power," said Harris, suffragan bishop of Massachusetts and the first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion. Unless church leaders learn to share their power with all of the people they hope to lead, they will continue to be faced with "dwindling numbers of worshippers and dwindling church revenues," according to Harris.

"The primary reason for division in the church is the cultural captivity of the Gospel, in which individuals and groups seek to define their own identity and power and status, rather than to transform that to the power of the Gospel." Harris lamented.

Reinvent the church?

Citing recent research by futurist Alvin Tofler, Harris noted that he points to resistance to change and the rise of fundamentalism. "Fundamentalist extremism is united in one thing: the fundamentalist wants to return to the earlier world where violence is the source of all power, and to control all change."

"Churches have been more focused on survival and charity than justice," Harris asserted. "There would seem to be no unanimity in old line churches about what the church is for, let alone the message of the gospels. We must be clear and articulate about what we want to do."

Citing the Rev. Loren Mead of the Alban Institute in his book *The Once and Future Church*, Harris said that "our task is to reinvent the institutional church. [Mead] envisions a church turned upside down. White male-dominated churches are operating directly counter to worldwide changes at grassroots levels.

"Would we be better off to close our current operations and start again?" Harris asked. "Can Christians find anything to focus on as a uniting force?"

"As people of faith, we believe the greatest source of power is God's love for us in the ministry, death and resurrection of Christ. But as Frederick Douglas said, those who wish changes to be easy and peaceful are like those who like rain without lightning, or redemption without judgement.

"The test for us is to embrace change as growth. To do less is to avoid the call of Christ wherever he would lead us," Harris concluded.

Focus on racism

Harris's address at the closing banquet of the 14th annual EUC meeting capped two days of lectures and workshops on the issues of racism in the church and society. The agenda had been set in Cincinnati last year, when the caucus responded to the racism resolutions adopted by the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix.

Setting the tone of the meeting, the Hon. Byron Rushing of Massachusetts suggested that a new paradigm must emerge from the historical polarity between blacks, whites and other races. "Our challenge is to say to ourselves, our church and this world that racism is not our nature," Rushing said.

Rushing, a representative in the Massachusetts State Legislature and a former president of the caucus, said that if racism is going to be eradicated in the church and society, it is necessary to "name it, repent for it and envision

what it would be like in a society with no racism."

"None of this is going to happen naturally. Sins don't go away on their own," Rushing added, "We have in this room the ability to move the Episcopal Church--but we are talking about something very difficult," he told the participants representing 25 dioceses of the Episcopal Church.

Rushing's message was bolstered during a workshop introducing "Dreamworks," a new anti-racism program developed and being field-tested in the Diocese of Massachusetts. Co-authors Judith Conley and the Rev. Charles Virga led a two-hour session which highlighted some of the exercises offered in the new program, which will be distributed through the Urban Caucus.

"It is not a matter of meeting for three hours, holding hands and singing 'We Shall Overcome,'" Conley said. "It is a life-long, evolutionary process that will never end."

Virga, co-director of the project, explained that parish and diocesan structures are the targets, rather than individual attitudes. The exercises also can be used for issues other than racism, he noted.

Continued pain

Leading the group through one exercise, Conley and Virga asked participants in face-to-face conversations to remember an adult who had taught them that racism was wrong. Reflecting on the exercise later, one white male participant said, "I tried to think of any adult who gave me a positive expression of other races. And I realized I was raised to be a racist and I'm tired of trying to correct this."

A black male participant said bluntly, "Like many of us it is seldom I have an opportunity to speak to a white adult about these issues... It was a recollection of how much I have to suppress since childhood. And I was getting angry. How long does this have to go on--dealing with this issue every day of your life? You just get tired of dealing with it."

That viewpoint was echoed during a plenary session in which a dozen dioceses reported on their experiences, work and frustrations in responding to the 1991 resolutions. Few dioceses have enacted resolutions to implement General Convention's mandates. Reports included candid remarks about bishops, clergy and lay people who have allegedly blocked efforts to discuss racism issues, or dioceses which have avoided funding racism work. "It's difficult to keep people focused," said one woman, adding that sexuality and other issues have garnered more attention in recent times. "My only advice is to be like the widow and keep hammering away at the door."

Caucus members were also critical of themselves, noting that while there was almost equal representation of blacks and whites, male and female,

clergy and laity, there were no American Indians and no Asians at the meeting. "We need to model inclusivity," one woman said.

The workshop moved on to envisioning how the EUC could model anti-racism. Throughout the two days, lists and suggestions were made, moving toward a focused agenda the caucus executive board will refine in coming months.

'In for the long haul'

The Rev. Emmett Jarrett of Washington, D.C., president of the EUC, said in an interview that it is "not surprising that many dioceses are just starting on the 1991 resolutions. That is not cynicism, just realism," he said, noting that the caucus and others in the church fighting racism "are in for the long haul."

The caucus is developing a strategy with a three-fold mission: to focus on racism for the next nine years, to develop publications and materials for the church, and to affirm urban mission strategies."

"If we focus on racism," Jarrett warned, "we need to keep clarity about our primary goals. This is not a black-white issue only. And we need to be careful not to squabble with others about whose pain is greater," he added, referring to issues such as sexuality where emotions run strong. "We are at the point of a paradigm shift in society, the giving up of white power."

Annual racism report suggested

The EUC adopted one resolution that "the Episcopal Urban Caucus board create a mechanism by which we can identify and report annually to the membership incidents of overt and covert racism within parishes, dioceses, provinces and at the national church level and the outcomes, if any, of these incidents."

"This action will give us reasons to celebrate good news, explore and examine the reasons for unsatisfactory outcomes and will enable us to continue to be proactive rather than to be forced, by the very nature of racism itself, to be reactive," said Joanne Stevenson of the Diocese of North Carolina, who proposed the resolution.

"These annual reports will serve as navigators to chart our future caucus directions and priorities," Stevenson said. "The wall of denial in the church must come down. We can bring it down, together, one brick at a time," she added. "The church must face its fear of racism. How can you preach to others about freedom if you are not free yourself? The caucus cannot allow anything but the truth to guide her path. Our footing is made sure on this road to freedom, we clear the way for the church to follow. We,

through our service and sacrifice, will have made her journey safe," she concluded.

--Michael Barwell is communications director for the Diocese of Southern Ohio.

93033

Archbishop George Browne of Liberia, 'peacemaker and visionary,' dead at 59

by Jeffrey Penn

The Most Rev. George Browne, 59, archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa and bishop of Liberia, died February 15 in Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital in Milwaukee after an extended illness.

Browne was internationally renowned for his defiant leadership throughout the civil warfare in Liberia, where he was one of only two church leaders to stay in the capital of Monrovia during the height of the conflict in the summer of 1990.

"Archbishop George Browne was a great African bishop," said Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey. "He brought to his episcopal ministry gifts of wisdom and discernment that proved invaluable to Christians from his diocese, from his province...and from fellow Liberians who looked to him for personal guidance."

Threats of torture and death

During the Episcopal Church's 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, Browne vividly described the anxiety of life in a country wracked by civil war. He recounted the isolation from family and friends, facing threats of torture and death by armed bands of so-called "freedom fighters."

Browne said that he and others were forced to scavenge for leaves and the hearts of palm trees because food supplies were not allowed through rebel lines. Wheelbarrows, the only "vehicles" available at the time, were used as ambulances for the wounded and dying, Browne said. During the nine-month period that he was in hiding, Browne lost 50 pounds and was near death.

"It says a great deal about Archbishop Browne and his understanding of Christian ministry that he deliberately chose to stay in Liberia with his people," said Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning. "I know there are times when there are very good reasons to leave in similar situations, however George chose to stay. The conditions he lived under those difficult days I feel sure brought on the illness that caused his untimely death.

"George Browne was a true shepherd in the deepest sense of what that means," Browning added. "In some sense our dear brother was the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep."

Peacemaker and visionary

Following the assassination of former Liberian President Samuel Doe in September 1990, Browne opened seven Episcopal churches in the capital of Monrovia, offered help and spiritual guidance to a terrorized people. And he made himself personal emissary and negotiator with leaders of the warring factions, trying to bring peace. His life was threatened repeatedly.

"Archbishop Browne demonstrated unusual courage, commitment and love for his people by not abandoning them during this very cruel and bitter civil conflict," said the Rev. Nathaniel Porter, the Episcopal Church's partnership officer for Africa. "He is highly regarded, not only by Anglicans but also by all the people of West Africa."

"He was respected by the different political factions as a man of the highest integrity and truth...and for his vision of Liberia as a peaceful and functioning country." Porter said that Browne leaves the legacy of "a peacemaker and visionary for his people and his church."

Childhood poverty fortified him for ministry

Browne was born on December 17, 1933, in Garraway, Cape Palmas, Liberia. He received degrees from of Cuttington College in Liberia, and the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. He was ordained a deacon in 1962 and a priest in 1963. Browne was elected the first indigenous bishop of Liberia on April 1, 1970, and was consecrated in Trinity Cathedral in Monrovia, Liberia, on August 6, 1970. Browne became primate of the Province of West Africa when it became an independent province of the Anglican Communion in 1982. Prior to that the province was a missionary diocese of the Episcopal Church.

In a brief autobiography he wrote shortly after his election as bishop, Browne recounted how an interreligious and interfamily conflict set him on a path that eventually led him to the priesthood. Although Browne's maternal grandfather was an Americo-Liberian Episcopal priest, his paternal grandfather

was a high priest of African traditional religion. Browne's mother spirited him away in the middle of the night as a three-year-old so that she could raise him as a Christian and provide for an education.

Browne wrote that a childhood of poverty had fortified him for his ministry in later life. "I was sent to school in the afternoons and in the mornings I either went around town selling biscuits a penny apiece or went in a canoe up the river to fetch firewood," he wrote of his childhood.

Several services to pay tribute

A memorial service for Browne was set for All Saints Cathedral in Milwaukee on February 26 at 10:00 a.m. A wake will follow in New York City's Church of the Intercession on the evening of the February 26, and a funeral service will be held at the Church of the Intercession at 10:00 a.m. on February 27. Final burial will occur in Liberia.

Browne is survived by his wife, the former Clavender Agnes Railey, and their seven children.

93034

Bishop Furman Stough returns to Alabama to begin 'new ministry'

Bishop Robert Miller of Alabama has announced that his predecessor, Bishop Furman Stough, will return to the Diocese of Alabama as assistant bishop beginning July 1.

"I am overjoyed that Bishop Stough will be coming back to the diocese and that he has accepted my invitation to be assistant bishop," Miller said. "Bishop Stough will assist me in parish episcopal visitations and the diocese will rely on his experience and knowledge to support our programs in stewardship and planned giving."

Stough served as bishop of Alabama from 1971 until 1988, when he received an appointment at the Episcopal Church's national headquarters in New York City. For five years, Stough was senior executive for planning and deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. "I have accomplished, to a large extent, what I was called to do in New York," Stough said. "I feel good about what has happened."

Continuing service to the national church

Stough said that he will continue his work for national church on a part-time basis, primarily working on the Episcopal Legacy Fund, the church's national effort to provide scholarships to ethnic minority college students.

Stough was instrumental in the early support for the Legacy Fund which was established in 1991 as a tribute to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "The Legacy Fund is extremely important because it is absolutely critical that minority young people be given as much opportunity as possible for higher education," Stough said. "I see this as a very integral part of the church's mission."

In addition, Stough will continue to serve as special advisor to Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and will continue to develop the church's efforts with major donors for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. Stough said that he will return to New York for one week each month until the Episcopal Church's General Convention in September 1994.

Sharing a vision of the worldwide church

Stough said that his experience of the national and international church would "help me to share a vision of the worldwide church to the people of Alabama with more conviction than I have ever done before." He said that, in addition to the personal dimension of the Christian message, "the Gospel must also speak to the world's needs--that is what mission is all about."

Stough will return to his home in Birmingham and will work out of the diocesan offices there.

93035

National student gathering becomes forum for faith and diversity

More than 200 participants at a national gathering of Episcopal college students, chaplains and faculty discovered that the Episcopal Church is big enough to include persons who do not always agree about important issues.

The participants at the recent fifth annual gathering, sponsored by the Episcopal Church's Office of Ministry in Higher Education, at Epworth Center on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, were challenged to share their stories of faith and listen to the witness of others.

In a keynote address to the gathering, the Rev. Tracey Lind, rector of an urban parish in Paterson, New Jersey, urged students to be open to hear God's voice in their own encounter with life. "Knowing the story of Jesus Christ and finding our place in it helps us face the changing world of our own day and find God in it," she said, addressing the theme, "Keeping the Faith: God in a Changing World."

Diversity is not always comfortable

Diversity was reflected at every level of the gathering, including music from Native American, Asian, Hispanic and African-American traditions as well as from the 1982 Hymnal. Liturgies from across the Anglican Communion were used in worship, including forms from the charismatic movement, meditative prayer and the chants of Taizé.

Students soon discovered that affirming diversity is not always easy or comfortable. Sharp disagreements among students on how the faith should meet contemporary challenges reflected debates in the wider church. One member of an ad hoc "traditionalist caucus" quipped that the gathering might better have been named "Keeping the World by Changing the Faith."

"The conference revealed the differences in the Episcopal Church, and invited students to explore their feelings about that," said the Rev. Jep Streit, Episcopal chaplain at Boston University and chair of the planning committee for the meeting.

A microcosm of the church

"I think the variety of viewpoints among students at the conference reflected many of the debates in the wider church. It was a microcosm of the church," Streit said. He added that the gathering altered its agenda so that all concerns could be addressed.

Lind asserted that affirming diversity in the church has a built-in tension, but that Christians "cannot afford to excommunicate each other... We must keep recognizing that we're family. Sometimes that means what we have to share at the table is our pain, not our agreement," she said.

Streit said that the gatherings help to inform and empower future leaders of the church. "These gatherings are important because they give Episcopal college students from all over the country a sense of the diversity in the church. It also is an opportunity for the participants to share new ideas and vision for ministry in their own setting when they return home."

"I think many of the students will return to their campuses with a clearer understanding of differences among Episcopalians and how we live together and keep talking in spite of those differences," Streit said.

93036

Team of Irish peacemakers plead for economic help during U.S. visit

by James Solheim

The four top religious leaders from Ireland used an eight-day U.S. visit to preach reconciliation and tolerance as the path to "peace, prosperity and political progress."

During a February tour of Washington, Philadelphia, New York and Boston, the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican church leaders urged American support for their efforts and pleaded for economic investment in Northern Ireland.

"We have come to confront the lie that what is happening in Northern Ireland is some sort of religious war between Roman Catholics and Protestants," said Anglican Archbishop Robert Eames of Armagh.

Cardinal Cahal Daly, Roman Catholic primate of Ireland, said that poverty and high unemployment are the underlying causes of the violence, making it difficult to address the underlying pattern of economic discrimination against Roman Catholics.

In conversations with leaders in the political, business, religious and academic communities, the church leaders preached a message of hope for a future that lies not in violence but in economic development, political negotiation for sharing of power and building trust through cooperative programs. During a luncheon at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, the ecumenical team discussed "the appropriate role of churches as conscientious shareholders in U.S. companies doing business in Northern Ireland--and their partnership with churches there," according to the Rev. Brian Grieves, the Episcopal Church's peace and justice officer. "It could mean a great deal in forging a whole new partnership between churches here and in Northern Ireland," he said.

"One of the principal tasks of the churches in Ireland is to create understanding across ancient lines of religious, cultural and political rupture and consequent mistrust," the leaders said in a joint statement on their February 8 arrival.

Roman Catholic-Protestant relations in Northern Ireland "have never been better," said the Rev. Derek Ritchie, president of the Methodist Church in Ireland, at a news conference. "We are on the road together," Cardinal Daly added. "There has been progress but there is still a lot more to do."

93037

Changes in England's religious life provoke new debate on establishment

Recent turmoil in Britain's royal family has provoked new debate on the relationship between the state and the Church of England. Archbishop of York John Habgood set off the debate when he was asked during an interview if the sovereign should continue to be supreme governor of an established church. "If the church is to relate to the nation as a whole, the relationship with the sovereign is necessary," Habgood said on a BBC television program.

Critics are suggesting that the role of the monarch as symbolic head of the church is out of step with the religious texture of a modern nation like England.

When asked if Prince Charles could be governor of the church, in light of his marital problems and potential divorce, Habgood said it shouldn't make a difference but he did advocate revision of the coronation oath because "the religious make-up of the country has changed so much."

Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey agreed with Habgood. "Between 1953 and 1993 the religious map of England has changed out of all recognition," he said during a radio interview. And he agreed that it was time to look at the coronation service.

Carey also agreed with Habgood that there was no bar to Prince Charles becoming supreme governor of the church, adding that it was part of his job to be "at the disposal of the royal family, to encourage and to help them and to be with them." He also suggested that the issue of remarrying divorced people in the church will be dealt with at the General Synod. He spoke strongly against disestablishment of the church.

The former archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Robert Runcie, said that the advantages of establishment outweigh the disadvantages because it gives the church "the opportunity of keeping faith alive in a secular age." He said the debate should not be embroiled in current controversies about the royal family.

Yet Runcie said disestablishment was inevitable, adding that he once thought it "was quite likely to happen before the end of the century." The arguments against establishment are quite strong, according to Runcie, in light of the increasing pluralism of British society.



news briefs

93038

Oregon congregation leaves Episcopal Church

St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Portland, Oregon, voted on January 24 by a margin of 9 to 1 to leave the Episcopal Church and join the Anglican Church in America, one of the so-called "continuing churches." Jay Pearce, a member of the congregation's vestry, said the split was precipitated by a letter from the Diocese of Oregon reminding congregations that parish property belongs to the denomination and diocese. "It (the letter from the diocese) squarely went against the historical stands at St. Mark's," said Pearce. The present church building was given by Catherine Percival, whose brother is regarded as one of the founders of the traditionalist movement in Anglicanism. St. Mark's parishioners believe control of the property is in their hands. The Anglican Church in America was formed in 1991 through a partial merger of two previously existing traditionalist bodies that split from the Episcopal Church--the Anglican Catholic Church and American Episcopal Church.

Survey augments picture of religion in England

Despite perennial reports that religious affiliation and church attendance in England is marginal and decreasing, new statistics paint a more complicated picture. The recently published *British Social Attitudes* gives the following figures in terms of how people see themselves: 36 percent are Anglican, 11 percent belong to other Protestant denominations, 10 percent are Roman Catholic and 4 percent call themselves "Christian" but give no denomination. Only 3 percent are members of other religions and 35 percent have "no religion." The ninth version of the survey goes on to note that, while 61 percent are identified as Christian, 16 percent of the population attend a place of worship two or three times a month, 20 percent attend once a month, 30 percent several times a year and 50 percent at some time during the year. Also, 27 percent pray weekly, 17 percent have had a "conversion" experience

and only 33 percent of the population disagrees with the proposition that "right and wrong should be based on God's laws." About 70 percent believe that there should be daily prayers in all state schools.

Video shows Church of England "alive and kicking"

In the recently released 28-minute video entitled *Yours Faithfully, The Church of England*, there are fleeting shots of medieval cathedrals and angelic choirboys, but the main emphasis is on dusting off the church's stodgy image. The Archbishop of Canterbury, for example, appears in a paper hat, talking earnestly to teenagers at a youth event billed as "the Ultimate Christian Rave." "The video shows that, contrary to what the doom merchants say, the church is alive and kicking," said the Rev. Eric Shegog, the church's director of communications. "The primary target group is people in the pews, who will say 'Gosh, I didn't know we were doing all that,'" Shegog added. The video, which sells for \$15 a copy, presents a picture of the church as a modern organization working in the community. The video singles out the south London parish of Christ Church, Brixton, as an example of a once-moribund church that has sprung back to life. Condemned for demolition in 1975, the huge Victorian building was saved after a campaign by its tiny congregation and is now the setting for well-attended services which conclude with West Indian-style singing and dancing.

Presiding Bishop's Fund extends additional aid

The executive committee of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief at a meeting on February 17 voted to give additional grants to three dioceses involved with rehabilitation projects in response to Hurricane Andrew. A grant of \$200,000 was approved for the Diocese of Western Louisiana, bringing the total of money received by that diocese to \$350,000. The Diocese of Nassau and the Bahamas was allocated \$94,139, making a total of \$204,139. And the Diocese of Southeast Florida was given \$55,000, bringing its total to \$725,000. Including an earlier \$25,000 grant made to the Diocese of Louisiana, the executive committee's action completed distribution of the total of \$1,304,139 received in response to Hurricane Andrew by the end of 1992.

Southern Ohio urges examination of "conscience clause"

Southern Ohio's diocesan council and standing committee voted unanimously at its February 13 meeting to urge Bishop Herbert Thompson to encourage the House of Bishops to reexamine the Port St. Lucie "conscience clause" on the ordination of women. "This standing committee--and council--

feels the bishops must revisit this clause, whether they want to or not," said Rev. Nick Gill, first vice president of diocesan council. Gill reported that the standing committee is concerned with continued use of the 1977 Port St. Lucie agreement, named after the Florida city in which the House of Bishops enacted a compromise resolution in 1976 following General Convention's approval of the ordination of women. The "conscience clause" established that "no bishop, priest, or lay person should be coerced or penalized in any manner" for opposing the decision to ordain women. "Our feeling is that the Port St. Lucie agreement, now 17 years old, was in place for the bishops who were seated at that time," Gill explained.

Pope cautions Sudan against imposing Islamic law

At the beginning of his recent African tour, Pope John Paul II announced that the Vatican and its supporters would strongly resist the imposition of Islamic law on Christians in the southern part of the Sudan. "The role of the church, the Holy See and the bishops is to remind leaders of Muslim countries that Islamic law can be applied only to the Muslim faithful," the Pope said. Sudanese Christians are opposed to the movement among northern Muslims who want to extend the *sharia*, the Islamic legal code, throughout the country. "You absolutely cannot impose this law on those of other faiths who are Christian," the pope concluded.

Glimpse of early church uncovered at Canterbury

Recent excavations in the nave of Canterbury Cathedral uncovered the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon cathedral built by St. Augustine and brought to light traces of a third-century Roman building that may have been a church. To the disappointment of some scholars, however, the investigation is confined to areas in the cathedral where the flooring tiles are lifted to install an improved heating system. Professor Nicholas Brooks, author of *The Early History of the Church in Canterbury*, described the excavations as "enormously important" and added that "unless work is continued, tantalizing information about our earliest Christian building will be hidden beneath the new floor for at least 200 years." A statement issued by the cathedral said that while "archeological research is important... it has to be balanced against the needs of a living church. Large excavations have been allowed; to extend these would not be possible."

Tutu prepared to urge lifting of sanctions

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said recently that as soon as South Africa was governed by a transitional authority which provided for multi-party control

of the security forces, he would ask the U.S. government to allow South Africa access to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. As soon as a broadly acceptable transitional arrangement was made, Tutu said that he would be in touch with the White House with the request, "because we want to see the economy being given the kickstart that it requires in order for all the backlogs, the legacy of apartheid, to be dealt with expeditiously and efficiently." He added, however, that the only way to control the violence in the country and procure an acceptable transition was if "people are certain that the security forces do not have elements among them who are subverting the negotiation process."

NCC issues statement of support for Clinton

The National Council of Churches' (NCC) General Secretary Joan Campbell recently issued a statement giving President Clinton "high marks for his first State of the Union message. His vision of renewed economic life is refreshing in its intention to be fair, demanding and equitable," Campbell wrote in a statement signed by many other church leaders. "The economic proposals appear to be marked by honesty about where we are, an embrace of more progressive tax structures, a sensitivity to low-income and unemployed people, and creative ways to harness human skills and energy," the letter said. "A careful evaluation of the appropriations and their actual human and economic impact will, of course, be needed. Yet the President has balanced an alternative moral vision with hard fiscal and political realities. That holds great promise."

Chilstrom supports Clinton on gays

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom has written to President Bill Clinton in support of the proposal to allow persons to serve in the military regardless of their sexual orientation. "Your position is in many respects similar to that which this church and many other denominations hold regarding ordained persons," Chilstrom wrote. "We do not ban gay and lesbian persons from becoming pastors in our church. We do, however, have a clear set of standards and expectations for all who are ordained. We judge them by their behavior rather than on the basis of sexual orientation." In his letter to Clinton, Chilstrom also urged leaders to not forget the "enormous problem" with the sexual misconduct of heterosexual persons in the military. "Entire communities whose principal industry is prostitution have grown up in places adjacent to military bases," he said.

Muslim-Episcopal committee condemns violence

The Muslim-Episcopal dialogue committee of New York released a statement recently condemning "the gross violence committed in the name of Christianity and Islam around the world." The statement said that "neither Islam nor Christianity teach persecution or violence in any way. On the contrary, we both worship the one--and the same--Almighty God. We both declare that human life is sacred because it was created by God. And both the Bible and the Qur'an condemn coercion and violence as a way of spreading the message of God." The statement concluded with a call for all Christians and Muslims to serve God by "working for peace and respect and compassion between our people."

Archbishop Carey urges concern for the homeless

During a recent ecumenical service at London's Westminster Abbey, Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey urged a crusade for an estimated 3 million homeless persons in Britain. "In God's eyes, the scandal is that human solidarity has broken down," Carey said. "We have turned away from the vision of building a community in which God's gifts are available to those in greatest need." The service, organized by the Churches' National Housing Coalition--a group which hopes to build 100,000 affordable new homes each year--concluded with Carey contending that "it is not God's will that in a country like Britain hundreds of thousands of people should still be denied access to a decent home. The fact that we live with this situation so easily suggests that we have grown dull."

Diocese of Virginia approves youth delegate provision

The 198th Annual Council of the Diocese of Virginia set an historic precedent during its January 29-30 meeting in Richmond with the passage of the first constitutional provision for youth delegation in the Episcopal Church. The constitutional change instructs the diocese's executive board to elect four council delegates under the age of 19. Supporters of the constitutional change argued that the youth are not only the future of the church, they *are* the church. Opponents questioned the council's restructuring of its policy-making body to designate votes for special populations, asserting that empowerment for ministry happens at baptism, not as a result of legislative vote and that council delegates should be elected by their respective vestries and congregations. The new youth delegates, who will have full seat, voice and vote, will be among other council delegates attending a special council May 1 to select two suffragan bishops for the diocese.

Southern Ohio has a cathedral again

Historic Christ Church in Cincinnati has been designated the new cathedral for the Diocese of Southern Ohio by Bishop Herbert Thompson, Jr. Since its founding in 1817, Christ Church has offered significant programs of outreach to the poor and homeless. The designation of the cathedral is a spiritual concern, Thompson said. "I hear God calling us to be more spiritually centered for the sake of the Episcopal Church and for the sake of those in our midst. It is my hope that we can reach out to the city in the time of its needs and focus our concern for the city and diocese." The diocese has been without a cathedral since St. Paul's Cathedral in Cincinnati was razed in 1928 because of structural problems. Subsequent bishops did not designate a cathedral. Bishop Henry Hobson offered one of the more innovative cathedrals in the Episcopal Church when he created what he called "The Cathedral on Wheels." Moving around the diocese, Hobson towed a converted mobile home that housed a chapel, hymnals, prayer books and folding chairs for use in rural areas.

People

Senator John C. Danforth (R-Mo.), ordained an Episcopal priest 30 years ago, has announced that he will retire from the U.S. Senate at the completion of his current term in 1995 and concentrate on his vocation in the church. In his announcement, Danforth said that he had "an unfulfilled commitment to the church," and revealed that he has been in conversations with Missouri Bishop Hays Rockwell about returning to a more active role. Danforth is not likely to return to parish ministry, but may work "in that dimension of the church that is its social ministry," Rockwell said. "As the church strives to make itself more compassionate and a more just place, certainly his experience would be enormously important." Danforth graduated with honors from Princeton University and received both his divinity and law degrees from Yale. Prior to his service in the U.S. Senate, Danforth was Attorney General of Missouri from 1968-1976. He has served on the staff of several churches in Missouri, is an honorary canon at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis and has served as an honorary associate at St. Alban's Church on the grounds of the Washington National Cathedral.

Ruth Nicastro, editor of *Episcopal News* in the Diocese of Los Angeles, has announced her retirement, effective July 1. For the past 17 years Nicastro held the dual post of diocesan missionary for communications and editor of the

News. In announcing her decision to retire, Nicastro said, "Much as I love this ministry, which has become so much a part of me, I felt it was time, at my tender age (67), for me to enter a new stage of my life where I will have more time to spend with my family." Nicastro will continue to serve as an editorial advisor to the newspaper and communications consultant to the diocese. "It is my wish and Ruth's," Bishop Frederick Borsch said, "that the *Episcopal News* continue to be the leading church publication it has become under her guidance. I am grateful that she will be available during the transition to a new editor and missioner and is willing to serve in an advisory capacity." Borsch has appointed a search committee to seek a new missioner/editor.

The Episcopal Church Foundation announced the choice of four new fellows for the academic year 1993-94. As Foundation Fellows, each of the new scholars intends to pursue a teaching career in an Episcopal seminary in the United States after graduation. The fellows are: **Sharon L. Ciccarelli**, recipient of the Dorothy A. Given Memorial Fellowship, who is awaiting acceptance to a doctoral program; **Alexander C. Irwin**, recipient of the John Victor Herd Fellowship, who will attend Harvard University; **J. Christopher King**, recipient of the Eugene W. Stetson Fellowship, who will attend Oriel College, University of Oxford; and **The Rev. Paul F.M. Zahl**, recipient of the William B. Given, Jr. Memorial Fellowship, who will attend the University of Tübingen, Germany.



news features

93039

Mission partners find vitality in visit to Iowa churches

by Nan Cobbey

The corn fields, brittle under their crust of snow, flashed by at 65-miles-an-hour as four near strangers, drove back and forth across the grid that is Iowa.

For five days and 740 miles, the Partners in Mission (PIM) visitors--Peg Anderson of Executive Council, Bishop Alfred Reid of Jamaica and two writers--traveled the diocese asking questions. What they learned gave them both hope and pause.

They heard tales of woe and stories of devotion. They listened to praise and blame about "the national church." They witnessed heroic ministries in ambivalent environments and they came away impressed with the vitality of the church.

Visit to diocese presents challenges

Visitors to Iowa didn't hear the complaints PIM visitors in 18 other dioceses did about sexism, racism and insensitivity to lay ministry--but they heard the same worries about isolation, declining denominational loyalty and dwindling resources.

"I learned [much] from this visit that will enrich my own ministry," Reid told the Diocesan Council the day before he left. He praised the clergy, saying that on the return to his diocese, which "doesn't yet ordain women, one of the things I will share is the impact made on me by the women priests."

He also offered a none-too-subtle challenge. After noting "the absence of any black person anywhere I've been...with just one exception," he

contended that racism and the injustice it brings remain issues for the church. In a voice soft with concern, Reid said that, "as Anglicans we have a responsibility to speak to power...just standing with the poor, by itself, is not always sufficient."

Reid, suffragan bishop of Montego Bay in the Church of the West Indies, had come to a climate and countryside as unlike the steamy, hibiscus-covered hills of Jamaica as his songlike speech was from the clipped cadences of the Midwest. His perspective on Native American ministry was revealing, coming as it did from one known as Jamaica's champion of church decolonization and indigenization.

The man who commissioned island artists to create Jamaican images of Christ, baptismal fonts patterned after clay *yabbas* (basins women use for washing food), and musical settings for the Eucharist in the island's famous reggae beat, delighted in seeing a corresponding effort in Iowa. He praised the adoption of Native American symbols and music in a Sioux City church.

Staying healthy

Anderson brought an equally astute appreciation of the challenges facing the church in Iowa. Though now a resident of Tucson, Arizona, the former lobbyist earned her reputation as a "no-nonsense political pro" while leading Iowa's campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment in 1980. She relished the visit to a church she'd loved and left behind six years before. As she renewed old acquaintances, Anderson marveled at changes wrought by "the new bishop," Christopher Epting, elected in 1988.

"Everybody really does respond to [his] leadership in a very positive way," she told Diocesan Council. "They feel real support, real collegiality and that's an important part of staying healthy." Anderson, too, was "terribly impressed" with the women clergy. "Iowa should be very proud of what they've done here with women's ministries."

Reid and Anderson traveled through Iowa's northeastern corner meeting clergy, vestries, ecumenical partners and diocesan staff. They saw mission churches sharing clergy, a Jubilee Center ministering to Native Americans, an urban parish providing space for AIDS ministry and a university chaplaincy just beginning outreach to the poor.

Their task was to observe and report on the health of the church. They were asked to listen to its voices, note its desires and petitions, discern its weaknesses and evaluate its witness.

Unheard voices

From the mission priest who said his parishioners feel "the Episcopal

Church is being shown as the too liberal voice" to the Santee Sioux church member lamenting "people making decisions for us who have no idea who we are," Iowa Episcopalians said their voices and needs often go unheard or unheeded by the national church and sometimes even by the diocese.

"Who speaks for rural, mission churches?" the Rev. Kathleen Milligan asked rhetorically during a gathering of mission clergy in Storm Lake. It is all but impossible, she said, for people from "tiny rural churches" to be elected to General Convention. (Diocesan administrator Pete Harris supported her concern later when, explaining that 36 of Iowa's 66 churches are missions supported by the diocese, said that "over 90 percent of our churches have fewer than 100 members.")

The Rev. Margaret Silk, who serves three mission congregations, one of them over the border in South Dakota, named another source of annoyance for parishioners: a national church agenda that does not reflect their thinking. Human sexuality was the example she gave. "For most parishioners that is not an issue. You have to teach them why it is an issue... They don't want to deal with it. They want to stay away from conflict. They think it doesn't affect anything in their worshiping community," she said.

In their written report to the diocese, Reid and Anderson responded to that concern, saying that they had tried to share with those gathered for the Partners in Mission Consultation "the need you [feel] for a clearer teaching authority of the church, a framework in which to make moral decisions."

Their report lists many of the concerns they heard: "the desire for better communication from the national level...the need for a clear affirmation of who we are as the Episcopal Church...concern about the effect on the church of changing demographics...the increasing secularization of society...the breakdown in denominational loyalties."

Struggling but hopeful

Yet despite the concerns, Reid and Anderson saw much to praise, starting with Bishop Epting's vision of church as a series of "ministering communities."

On their first day in Iowa, Epting told Reid and Anderson, "I think one of the biggest problems we face in the Episcopal Church is a kind of passive congregation...a community gathered around a minister." Epting's goal is to shift that mentality so that "instead of thinking the congregation is there to congregate and the minister...to minister, we all see ourselves as ministers of the Gospel."

Throughout their visit, Anderson and Reid found a church struggling but hopeful, a church dwarfed by Lutherans and Methodists, threatened by

burgeoning congregations of evangelicals and "needing desperately to grow" as diocesan administrator Harris kept saying, yet open and optimistic.

In their final report, the two lauded the spirit they sensed everywhere they went: "Our overall impression is of a diocese blessed with strong, positive leadership from bright and enthusiastic clergy, dedicated lay people and...a very upbeat bishop."

--Nan Cobbey is features editor of *Episcopal Life*.

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Trinity Institute explores need for conversation in a pluralistic society

by Elizabeth Eisenstadt

How do we carry on a conversation with others in a society where disagreements and controversies constantly divide us? That question brought over 400 participants from across the nation to the 24th Trinity Institute at New York's Trinity Parish in Wall Street on February 2-4.

Dr. Martin Marty, professor of modern church history at the University of Chicago, helped Institute director Frederic Burnham see that "The Art of Conversation: Speaking of God in a Pluralistic Age" was the logical next step in the Institute's exploration in recent years of "pieces of the post-modern puzzle," in Burnham's description.

Conversation, among human beings or with God, is "the only possible paradigm that makes any sense in a pluralistic or an inclusive world--or in a world that honors not just authority and power but every human being," Burnham added in an interview.

In his opening address, Marty gave a brief history of theological conversation, noting that it is as old as the first chapter of Genesis where God speaks and nature responds. In a conversation with others, particularly those with different beliefs, participants should be open to many possibilities because "you never know where it will go," he said.

This year's Institute was beamed by satellite to 23 other sites in 20 states so that callers could participate in the dialogue with speakers.

Therefore, Marty was able to tell a caller from New Jersey that conversations would not go anywhere unless the participants brought a sense of their own identity as people of faith.

A model of conversation

Professor Rebecca Chop of Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta encouraged participants to look at a feminist understanding of friendship as a possible model for conversation in the church.

Chopp contended that our relationship with God is modeled both as passionate conversation and friendship with other human beings who may be quite different. One of the contributions of feminist theology is the recognition that conversation "is not modeled on two individuals but on a community," a good model for the church.

African American religious tradition has its own contributions, suggested Robert Franklin, also from Candler. Among the hallmarks of that tradition Franklin listed prophetic preaching, therapeutic prayer in public worship, a defiant spirituality and a long history of respect for pluralism.

Because of his long interest in conversation across racial and cultural lines, Franklin started a dialogue between inner-city black parishes and white churches in Rochester, New York. After worship, storytelling and confession, as well as collaboration on a social service project, participants gradually opened themselves to constructive criticism from other group members.

Is conversation possible?

Can we really have conversation in a pluralistic society where we face what appear to be irreconcilable differences over issues such as abortion, racism and sexual orientation? asked Harvard Divinity School Dean Ronald Thiemann.

Christians must not only find common ground for conversation with those who differ, Thiemann argued, they must also begin to engage in the painful process of constructing communities that are genuinely diverse and open.

As "pilgrim citizens" bearing a "cruciform hope," Thiemann said, "we are people on the way to a future that God has created for us." We may not know what that future is, he added, but we "are being led into the future by a God of grace and love."

During an evening presentation on "Public Discourse in Contemporary America" moderated by Hodding Carter, a panel sharply differed over the possibilities for such public conversation. Bard College President Leon Botstein argued that "there is no public discourse of any quality," largely

because we have "erased the distinction between violence and words" and words are now used as "a means of violence."

On the other hand, Mary Futrell, former president of the National Education Association, took a more hopeful view, arguing that polarization on some issues "doesn't mean that we won't be able to come together. We are going through a dramatic period of change in this country and I have to believe that America is strong enough to endure that."

Writer Parker Palmer identified areas where the image or metaphor of conversation might reform our thinking about who we are and the realities we face. He argued, for example, that we must find a new way to structure conversations in our churches and institutions. If a majority rule is seen as a form of violence imposed on the minority, then the Quaker process of decision-making by consensus becomes more attractive because it forces us "to listen to the opposition in new ways, to hear what is strong, what I might connect with, build a bridge with," Palmer said.

Sociologist Robert Bellah, the Institute's concluding speaker, described the social and spiritual problems afflicting American society and suggested that the Episcopal Church, rooted in tradition but not chained to it, could serve as a regenerative force by engaging the culture in the search for solutions to the problems that divide us as a society.

"We should continue the convictions which have long characterized us as a church...there is divine truth and objective morality, but we discern it without the conviction that we have always got it right," Bellah said.

—Elizabeth Eisenstadt is a freelance writer in Washington, D.C.



reviews and resources

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Upcoming Kanuga Conferences Announced

Among the upcoming events scheduled at the Kanuga Conference Center are three of broad interest to Episcopal Church members, focusing on religious imagery, HIV/AIDS and Anglicanism. Highly acclaimed author Madeleine L'Engle is the keynote speaker at *The Faces of God*, May 30-June 4, a conference focusing on the place and function of visual metaphors, including icons and idols, as they reveal to God. *A Journey of Hope... A Retreat for People Affected by HIV/AIDS*, June 11-13, is a prayer-centered weekend reaching out to people with HIV/AIDS, family members, partners, friends, caregivers, people involved in the HIV/AIDS ministry, clergy, social workers and medical professionals. Sir Paul Reeves, Anglican Observer to the United Nations, former primate of the Anglican Church in New Zealand and also former governor general of New Zealand, is the featured speaker at the *Conference on Anglicanism: A Global Perspective*, June 20-25. The conference, with its theme of "We are the World," focuses on the special responsibility of Anglicans as members of a global family of 70 million members in 160 countries. For more information about these and other conferences at Kanuga, write to Kanuga Conferences, Inc., Postal Drawer 250, Hendersonville, NC 28793, or call (704) 692-9136.

Video on planning for death available

The Resource Center of the Diocese of Colorado recently announced the release of *Before Death Happens*, a new educational video series. The series is a four-session study course which encourages people to make informed choices regarding their own deaths and funerals--before a time of crisis--and to communicate these decisions to clergy, family and friends. The videos also explore ways to deal with grief and make practical decisions about

the disposition of the body and funeral services. *Before Death Happens* includes a study guide and is available for \$50. For information write the Resource Center, Diocese of Colorado, 1300 Washington St., Denver, CO, 80203, or call (303) 837-1173.

VISN to observe "Week of Solidarity"

The Vision Interfaith Satellite Network (VISN) will mark the observance of the United Nations "Week of Solidarity With the Peoples Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination" by airing profiles of two white South African ministers who have struggled against the evils of apartheid. *The Cry of Reason*, a hour-long profile of the Rev. Beyers Naude, a supporter of apartheid who became one of its outstanding opponents, will be the subject of "The Sacred Soul." Immediately following this program, a special edition of "The Human Factor" will offer *Between Two Worlds*, the story of Hank Zeeman, a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, who is working to bridge the gap between blacks and whites. The programs will air Saturday, March 20, at midnight, and Sunday, March 21, at 6 p.m.

Televised Easter service links four continents

For the first time in television history, Easter Sunday will be celebrated on the airwaves in a program entitled *Easter Alive 'Round the World* that will be fed by satellite from remote sites on four continents. The program will begin at the Beautiful Savior Church in New Hope, Minnesota, where Dr. A.L. Barry, president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), will preach at the U.S. worship service. Via satellite technology, services in Accra, Ghana, Seoul, Korea, and St. Petersburg, Russia, will join the New Hope congregation in word and song. "The Easter celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to the Christian faith and tradition," said the Rev. Paul Devantier, executive director of the LCMS board of communication services. "This worship--bringing language and tradition from four continents--emphasizes that Jesus died and rose for people everywhere." *Easter Alive 'Round the World* is produced by the LCMS in cooperation with the National Council of Churches. The program will be broadcast Easter Sunday, April 11 at 7:00-8:00 a.m. (Eastern Time) and 9:30-10:30 a.m. (Pacific Time) on ABC-TV. Check local listings for exact time in your area.

Common Prayer Khmer translation project underway

The Holy Family of Jesus Cambodian Episcopal Church in Tacoma, Washington, and St. John's Episcopal Church in Olympia, Washington,

announced the formation of the "Book of Common Prayer Khmer Translation Project" recently. The project will provide a translation of the Book of Common Prayer into Khmer, the language of Cambodia. "If we are interested in welcoming people from Cambodia into the Episcopal Church, we need to have the services available in the Khmer language," said Tithia Sum, Cambodian pastoral assistant at St. John's. "It is also hoped that we can locate Cambodian members of the Episcopal Church from throughout the country," Sum said in a statement directed to Episcopalians nationwide. "If there are Cambodians or other interested people in your congregation we would like to receive their names. We would like to share with them what we are doing and tell them they are invited to be a part of the project." Information or questions should be sent to the "Book of Common Prayer Khmer Translation Project," 2401 Bristol Ct. SW, Olympia WA 98502, telephone (206) 352-1127.

Churches asked to celebrate opening of Holocaust Memorial

In a letter to religious leaders throughout the nation, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum asked local churches to commemorate the museum's April 22 opening in connection with their religious services of the weekend of April 17-18, 1993. "The presence of this museum in Washington can make an immense contribution to the continuing challenge in American society to rebuke racism and religious prejudice wherever it exists," the letter said. Peggy Obrecht, director of church relations for the museum, added that "the museum pays tribute to those heroic Christians who risked their lives to save the victims of Nazi persecution, and it is our hope that Americans of all denominations will join together on that Sunday to reflect in harmony on the universal lessons of the Holocaust." To help local churches mark the occasion, a free booklet entitled *Rescue and Goodness* is available. The booklet contains an essay about the Christians who saved victims of Nazi Germany and an essay about the moral implications of the Holocaust-- "wonderful sermon material," according to Obrecht. For further information or to request copies of the booklet, contact Peggy Obrecht at 100 Raoul Wallenburg Place SW, Washington DC 20024-2150, or call (202) 488-0469 or (410) 532-8958.

Photos available in this issue of ENS:

1. Bishop examines headdress during PIM visit (93039)
2. Partners in mission report on diocesan visits (93029)
3. Mission partners seek new vision and a new heart (93029)
4. Trinity Institute promotes conversation amid pluralism (93040)

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are March 15 and March 31.